



NEWS RELEASE

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Water Authority Supports Bay-Delta Action Plan;

Lauds Governor's Efforts to Address Westside Ag Impacts

The San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority today announced its support of the framework described in the Bay-Delta Action Plan to be released tomorrow during a joint news conference by the State of California and the U.S. Department of the Interior.

"This Action Plan promises increased water supplies and improved reliability," said Dan Nelson, executive director of the Authority. "These are essential to the long-term viability of agricultural production in the San Joaquin Valley.

"It is evident from the Action Plan that the Governor understands that the westside of the San Joaquin Valley suffers from severe water shortages and has been disproportionately affected by regulatory actions in recent years," Nelson continued. "We appreciate the Governor's leadership and efforts on behalf of our members."

The Action Plan is the result of the federal and state negotiations known as CalFed. Established in 1994 under the Bay-Delta Accord, the CalFed agencies have worked to define a long-term water supply plan for the state.

The Authority represents 32 water agencies that receive all or a portion of their

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annual water supplies, totaling 3.3 million acre-feet of water, from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Included in that membership is more than 1.1 million acres of fertile farmland on the westside of the San Joaquin Valley and in Santa Clara and San Benito counties. The Authority also represents wetland and urban water suppliers, including Santa Clara Valley Water District, home to the multi-billion dollar Silicon Valley.

Because of increased federal regulations, including the reallocation of water for environmental purposes and implementation of the federal Endangered Species Act, the Authority's agricultural agencies have received full contract entitlements in only 2 of the past 10 years.

This year, with normal statewide precipitation and full reservoirs, westside water districts are receiving only a 60 percent entitlement. Federal water supplies for Silicon Valley in Santa Clara County also have been reduced to 85 percent.

The CalFed Action Plan sets forth a framework process in which final details can be enhanced prior to the release of the final EIR/EIS and Record of Decision in September. Once those documents are completed, implementation can begin.

"All interested parties face many challenges to ensure that the process is successful," said Nelson. "The Authority is committed to working with the Governor, Interior and state and federal legislators to refine the details of the Action Plan to ensure that its potential benefits come to fruition. We are confident that if the Governor maintains his personal involvement, we will achieve success, not only for the benefit of San Joaquin Valley agriculture, but for the good of this great state as well."

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